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Quatrains  
of Christ  
by George Creel





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# QUATRAINS OF CHRIST

By GEORGE CREEL

PREFACE BY JULIAN HAWTHORNE



PAUL ELDER & COMPANY  
SAN FRANCISCO AND NEW YORK



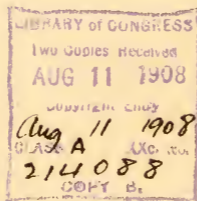
Bend on this wonder world a  
clearer eye,  
Hark closer to the soul's prophetic cry,  
Thrill with the happy song  
of growing things,  
And read the promise of the  
star-set sky.



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TO MY MOTHER  
WHOSE TENDER LOVE AND  
INSPIRING COMPANIONSHIP HAVE  
BEEN EVER PRESENT  
PROOFS OF GOD'S  
GOODNESS



## PREFACE

**I**T IS strange that the Christian world should have been in need of exactly such a book as this,—that after nineteen hundred years of Christianity we should lack a simple and straightforward reaffirmation of the truth of the Christian faith. Christ has been much patronized of late,—has been coupled in a sentence with Buddha and Confucius and other alleged saints and Messiahs of the past; but a man has been wanting to say that he is nothing less than God in the flesh,—Son of God as well as Son of man,—the Lord Incarnate, come to redeem us from our sins. Mr. George Creel comes forward to supply this deficiency; there is no evasion or compromise in his speech on the subject; his is the faith of the Early Christians, before the sectarians got to work on the plain-spoken, sublime records of the Divine Life on earth; he leaves scepticism on one side, and philosophy and the Higher Criticism on the other, and makes straight for his goal. His belief and testimony are as naif as that of a little child,—except we be as whom, we “can in now wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.” He has little concern with arguments; he appeals to the interior witness of the adoring heart. This is what the world needs, and no part of the world so much as that which calls itself Christian. His utterance is as free from the apologetic note as it is from acerbity and



## PREFACE

browbeating. He has felt the truth himself, deep down in his soul, and he cannot do otherwise than give it forth with all his soul and strength. He speaks not in contentiousness but in love. The living waters have touched his lips, and he longs to have others drink as he has drunk. He holds up the wonderful and radiant story before our eyes, and summons us to receive its glad tidings with worship and joy. The Lord has come down to earth; and through his lineaments, which we have mocked and disfigured, the light of His divinity shines unquenchable; and the very disfigurements are proof of the indwelling and emerging Perfection.

More than a thousand years after the Crucifixion, there was born in Nishapur, in the Far East, a gentle but cynical soul called Omar Khayyam. His experience of life distilled itself in a sort of kindly pessimism, and was embodied in a series of quatrains which lived their day and were forgotten, until, fifty years ago, an Irishman of kindred culture and temperament translated and remoulded some of them into a subtle and musical poem which embodied the eloquent philosophic despair of the last century. But it was not till long after Edward FitzGerald's death that the genius of an American artist, Elihu Veddar, gave his verses fame and wide recognition. The Englished Rubaiyat has ever since been conspicuous on the drawing-room table of



## PREFACE

culture here and in England, and sentimental women and self-indulgent men have echoed his stanzas whenever the roses of their hopes faded, or the pallor of their existence needed wine. "In the fire of spring," they murmur, "your winter garment of repentance fling"; adding that "The bird of life has but a little way to flutter—and the bird is on the wing!" It is a seductive strain, tending to disintegrate moral fibre, and by its attractive expression of a certain indolence of the modern mind, has perhaps done a good deal to discourage whatever remnants of virility were left in contemporary religious thought.

Mr. George Creel was therefore well inspired to attack the enemy on his own ground, and to fight him with his own weapon. The *Quatrains of Christ* are, in form, the Rubaiyat of Omar over again; but save that they are full of veritable poetry, they are as different from them in purpose and issue as light is different from shadow. They are informed with the beautiful wholesomeness of youth, reverence and candor; and they seem to avenge us of the old adage that the Devil has all the good tunes, by embodying in the very lilt and measure of disbelief the fragrance and beauty of true doctrine. There is not throughout the entire little volume one moment of nasal psalm-singing and unctuous exhortation; but there is not a verse in it, either, that is not joyfully religious through and through, and that does not convey an



## PREFACE

enthusiasm of conviction that is both instructive and contagious. Page after page is as though we were listening to Sir Galahad, pure in heart, as he sang in the forest, riding on his quest for the Holy Grail. And ever and anon the singer chants forth an actual phrase or figure from Old Omar, as though a new Moses were to transform the rods of Pharaoh's enchanters into hostile serpents to devour them. If humor were predicable of a poem so serious and vital in purpose as this, I should be disposed to think there was humor in these passages.

The interest in Creel's production, unlike Omar's or FitzGerald's, is continuous from page to page, instead of being confined to separate passages; so that though there is not, in strictness, either argument or narrative, there is a distinct thread of purpose and sentiment from end to end, which we follow with accumulating appreciation. The poet has read his Gospels with awakened and living insight; he has forgotten the commentators and the critics, and gives us the freshness and sweetness of the original story. He has kept it in his heart, and let it grow and fructify there. He has pondered longingly over the silence of the Gospel narratives as to the early boyhood of the Saviour:—

“Did Mary's arms turn childish griefs to  
bliss?  
Or did His holy mission make Him miss  
The happiness of youth's abandonings,  
The magic solace of a mother's kiss?”



## PREFACE

But he will not repine because no answer is returned to his listening ear. The loving heart can surmise truths which history dare not disclose; and he will listen to his heart,—

“ \* \* \* for as we see  
A child, locked in, leap up when it may be  
The watched-for, longed-for loved one  
comes at last,  
So does it leap, O Lord, to welcome  
thee!”

And it suffices to be assured that the Divine mission was fulfilled:—

“The worm within each rose’s heart was  
curled  
Until Thy mystic might at Nain hurled  
Death’s menace back upon itself and  
stilled  
The immemorial wailing of the world.”

I must remember that I am writing not a review but a preface; but what I have instanced will not forestall the reader’s pleasure or his interest. He will read this little book not once nor twice only, but will make it his own. It is a new thing in literature; but its appeal is to something deeper in man than the literary sense; it deals with an immortal theme, and shines with the reflection of the joyful dignity thereof.

JULIAN HAWTHORNE.





QUATRAINS  
OF  
CHRIST



✠ I ✠

**C**OME, strike thy harp's most  
high, exultant string,  
Until its golden ecstasy  
shall ring  
To very Heaven: thence flaming  
down the dark,  
Shall thrill dead souls to new, sweet  
blossoming.

✠ II ✠

**A**GAIN a Star dawns in the  
Eastern sky,  
Again the startled shepherd  
lifts his cry,  
As waking from his midnight  
sleep, he sees  
The camels of the Wise Men sweep-  
ing by.

✠ III ✠

**T**HE years have worked their  
measure of decay.  
Where is the inn or stable?  
Who can say,  
"This is the spot," or "There the  
very place  
Where Lord Christ came into the  
light of day"?



# QUATRAINS OF CHRIST



## ✠ IV ✠

**N**O MORE chants Caiaphas  
his vengeful song,  
And scattered to the wind  
is all the throng  
That clamored for Barabbas, only  
held  
In memory by reason of their  
wrong.

## ✠ V ✠

**T**HE weak-souled Pilate long  
has passed away,  
Great Cæsar, too, is now  
obstructive clay,  
Their mighty Rome forgotten  
save as theme  
To keep the grumbling schoolboy  
from his play.

## ✠ VI ✠

**B**UT still the sweet of frank-  
incense and myrrh  
Steals down the centuries,  
and as it were  
But yesterday, so sweet and new  
it seems,  
Did blessed Mary bear the Har-  
binger.



QUATRAINS  
OF  
CHRIST



✠ VII ✠

**B**UT yesterday that through  
the stable gloom  
An angel shape, with droop-  
ing pity's plume,  
Swept beaded anguish from the  
Virgin's brow  
That dewed sin-arid earth to vernal  
bloom.

✠ VIII ✠

**T**HOU giv'st to each a price-  
less diadem  
Of precious gifts, but, ah,  
the fairest gem  
Is that clear faith, O God, with  
which we shrine  
The miracle of far-off Bethlehem.

✠ IX ✠

**A**YE, bless us so, and let it  
never be  
Like tapestried romance  
men peer to see,  
Or some old song with meaning  
half forgot,  
That drowsy children hear at grand-  
sire's knee.



# QUATRAINS OF CHRIST



## ✠ X ✠

**A**LWAYS with sense of vividness — with thrill  
Of things intensely present — may we still  
Remember this: that human flesh  
and blood  
Were chosen to exemplify His will.

## ✠ XI ✠

**G**UARD us from Habit's  
poppied charm, and let  
The lotus-laden flight of  
Time beget  
No far-away, faint half-rememberings,  
No spectral shadowing or silhouette.

## ✠ XII ✠

**S**HRINK not, but draw in  
wide-eyed wonder near  
Each incident in all the  
Christ career —  
From birth to cross there were  
no veils or walls,  
And nearer makes it dearer and  
more clear.



QUATRAINS  
OF  
CHRIST



✠ XIII ✠

**O** VIRGIN, were thy young  
eyes unafraid,  
Or didst thou shrink, sore  
startled and dismayed,  
From that first mystic thrill when  
thou didst learn  
God's precious Burden had on thee  
been laid?

✠ XIV ✠

**H**OUD sang the golden-  
throated Cherubim,  
And all the wheeling hosts  
of Seraphim,  
Whose flashing pinions ermined  
humble thatch,  
And shot with fire the Heaven's  
sapphire rim.

✠ XV ✠

**W**HAT must have been thy  
happy, sweet amaze  
To see the sudden aureate  
halo blaze,  
And from the wide-flung gates  
of Paradise  
Hear mighty harmonies of joyous  
praise.



QUATRAINS  
OF  
CHRIST



✠ XVI ✠

**W**ERE sweet if knowledge  
bridged the gap between  
Christ's manger cradle and  
that later scene —  
Companioned by the elders, gray  
and grim —  
Full-blossomed youth in favor and  
in mien.

✠ XVII ✠

**D**ID laughter bubble as He  
leapt and ran?  
Was He as others ere His  
work began  
Of lifting from the World its dole  
of doubt,  
And making straight Salvation's  
tender plan?

✠ XVIII ✠

**O**R WAS there hint of Pi-  
late's fell decree,  
The lonely horror of Geth-  
semane,  
A prescience of thorny diadem,  
Or shadow from the hill of Cal-  
vary?



QUATRAINS  
OF  
CHRIST



✠ XIX ✠

**D**ID Mary's arms turn child-  
ish griefs to bliss?  
Or did His holy mission  
make Him miss  
The happiness of youth's aban-  
donings,  
The magic solace of a mother's  
kiss?

✠ XX ✠

**N**OR, given then the secret  
of those years,  
Long lapse of stripling days  
undamped with tears,  
I could come nearer to Him, and  
athrill,  
Be quit forever of my awes and  
fears.

✠ XXI ✠

**N**AY, Lord, let this not give  
offense to Thee,  
For if a passion for sheer  
nearness be  
Aroused by those of earth, then  
how much more  
When Thou art loved in such su-  
perb degree.



QUATRAINS  
OF  
CHRIST



✠ XXII ✠

**W**ERE thought of Thee doth  
pour into my veins  
A leaping flame that burns  
the sullen stains  
Of sin from out the broidered  
Cloth of Life,  
Till the fair fabric white and gold  
remains.

✠ XXIII ✠

**T**HE marvel blaze that blind-  
ed raging Saul,  
And held black Herod's  
savage soul in thrall —  
That swept from Mary all her  
silks and shame  
And ashed the splendor of her  
onyxed hall.

✠ XXIV ✠

**N**OW doth it rapture fancy  
and enchain  
Belief and love to marshal  
once again  
The great, kaleidoscopic surge of  
men  
Who felt that flame and followed  
in His train.



QUATRAINS  
OF  
CHRIST



✠ XXV ✠

**B**ETHINK you of this following! No part  
Gave all, nor class — as  
mountain torrents start  
In spring, they poured from palace, tent and cot,  
From sea and field, the desert and the mart.

✠ XXVI ✠

**H**IERCE Syrians, swart Punic chiefs, and bands  
Of blacks, grim Romans  
who in many lands  
Had seen strange gods, Egyptians, fire-eyed Gauls,  
Pale Greeks, and nomads yellowed  
with far sands.

✠ XXVII ✠

**S**O HUGELY great the number, none can tell  
How many died in circus  
or in cell  
For Him who was of their own  
day — and still  
We yield to Controversy's wasting  
spell!



# QUATRAINS OF CHRIST



## ✠ XXVIII ✠

“**F**OR Him who was of their  
own day!” Ah, there  
We have a sword, all rea-  
son-forged, to wear  
And wield in swirling splendor  
when against  
The Powers of the Dark we do and  
dare.

## ✠ XXIX ✠

**I**TS hilt star-studded by the  
mad array  
Of gems that ransomed  
Mary threw away,  
The flaming, ravished jewels that  
were Saul’s  
When stricken cities knew his ruth-  
less sway.

## ✠ XXX ✠

**A**ND witnesses! Ah, there  
was Pilate’s wife  
Who pleaded for the Gali-  
lean’s life,  
And tiger-hearted Herod, over-  
awed,  
Refused Christ Jesus to the heads-  
man’s knife.



# QUATRAINS OF CHRIST



## ✠ XXXI ✠

**H** O, MARTYRS' blood cas-  
cades from ev'ry page  
Of history, and Nero's de-  
mon rage  
Still chills the heart — then shall  
our voices rise,  
And futile argument our minds en-  
gage?

## ✠ XXXII ✠

**A** S HOMING birds flee from  
the darkling West,  
As babes with thrusting  
lips seek mother breast,  
So do I turn to Thee, thou tender  
Christ,  
My tear-scorched eyes asmile, my  
doubts at rest.

## ✠ XXXIII ✠

**I** N LOVING Thee I seek  
not Logic's aid,  
Nor do I ever ask to have  
displayed  
Disrupted Science's confusing  
page,  
O'er writ with guesses restless  
minds have made.



QUATRAINS  
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CHRIST



✠ XXXIV ✠

**B**UT listen to my heart, for  
as we see  
A child, locked in, leap up  
when it may be  
The watched-for, longed-for loved  
one comes at last,  
So does it leap, O Lord, to welcome  
Thee.

✠ XXXV ✠

**W**HEN sing of that they love,  
and so have sung  
In many ways since first  
the earth was young,  
So shall I then, in simple fashion,  
ease  
A heart by lack of full confession  
wrung.

✠ XXXVI ✠

**S**IMPLICITY! No other  
way is clear  
That may, at end of all,  
bring pilgrims near  
To Thee, O one white Flower  
swaying fair  
Amid the blighted blooms of yester-  
year.



QUATRAINS  
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CHRIST



✠ XXXVII ✠

**N**OR worship where pale  
priestesses supine  
All bloodily adore some  
midnight shrine,  
No mystic murmurings or stran-  
gled scream,  
But sound of singing brook and  
whispering pine.

✠ XXXVIII ✠

**W**HEN must the flame-eyed  
muse now strip, abashed,  
Of flowing, purpled splen-  
dors, jewel-splashed,  
And take the narrow path in  
cooling white,  
Her hair the maiden's way, and lily  
sashed.

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# QUATRAINS OF CHRIST



## ✠ XXXIX ✠

**W**HERE Alexander's steel  
with all its stains?  
Attila's mace that crumbled  
haughty reigns?

Alaric's lance or Soldan's scimitar?

The Savior's fadeless palm alone  
remains.

## ✠ XL ✠

**O** PRINCE of Peace, Thy  
argent temple yields  
Far richer spoils than e'er  
were brought on shields

From sack of Lydian metropolis,  
Or plundering of prostrate Persia's  
fields.

## ✠ XLI ✠

**T**HE ancient chains that  
weighed a people down,  
Oppression's dripping  
sword, the prison gown  
Of Opportunity, Injustice's red  
scourge,

And Tyranny's once awe-inspiring  
crown.



QUATRAINS  
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✠ XLII ✠

**A**ND over all, like Paradisal  
snow,  
The petals of Life's roses  
drift and glow —  
The thorns turned pointless in  
Thy heart of hearts,  
The blossom for Thy brothers here  
below.

✠ XLIII ✠

**T**HE wind that moaned an  
ancient pain away  
Was soothed of all its sobs  
and sick dismay —  
Thou gav'st new courage to the  
coward dawn  
And glad triumphant *guidons* to the  
day.

✠ XLIV ✠

**F**OR fevered living, fret and  
pain the price,  
Until the oil of Thy dear  
sacrifice  
Assuaged, and smoothed a hal-  
cyon expanse  
To mirror the allure of Paradise.



QUATRAINS  
OF  
CHRIST



✠ XLV ✠

**T**HE worm within each rose's  
heart was curled,  
Until Thy mystic might at  
Näin hurled  
Death's menace back upon itself  
and stilled  
The immemorial wailing of the  
world.

✠ XLVI ✠

**D**AYHAP, when Twilight's  
sombre hosts parade,  
That Terror's tears will  
hail the hasting Shade—  
Believe it ancient weakness of the  
flesh —  
My soul awaits Thy call all un-  
afraid.

✠ XLVII ✠

**B**UT will Thou not be tender  
of this fear,  
As mothers comfort when  
the dark is near,  
And while I huddle in the haunted  
gloom,  
Throw wide the gate, and let Thy  
light appear.



QUATRAINS  
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CHRIST



✠ XLVIII ✠

**I**S IT too much to ask, or  
will Thy wrath  
Be kindled by the creeping  
doubt that hath  
Its way with flesh? Ah, no, the  
dying thief  
Was fearful too, and Thou didst  
blaze his path.

✠ XLIX ✠

**A**ND as I, kneeling, breathe  
my silent prayer,  
When weak of heart or  
weighted with despair,  
I think of how the faithful Simon  
once  
Did help Thee, weary Christ, Thy  
cross to bear.

✠ L ✠

**O** CRUEL cross and Cal-  
vary's wild stress!  
A crown of thorns, a clos-  
ing tomb, the press  
Of traitor lips — what sorry gifts  
indeed  
To counterpoise unpurchased hap-  
piness!



QUATRAINS  
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CHRIST



✠ LI ✠

**B**UT it is done! The strange  
exchange is made!  
Salvation is for all, the price  
is paid —

So let us, shriven and consoled,  
abide  
In meek acceptance of the gracious  
trade.

✠ LII ✠

**N**OT thoughtless joy, nor yet  
the thoughtless tear,  
Not brazen forwardness  
nor shrinking fear,

But aye serene in perfect con-  
fidence  
Of marshalled love and mercy ever  
near.

✠ LIII ✠

**W**ET was Thy disappoint-  
ment with its tears,  
But one finds not that any-  
where appears

Grim Melancholy as Thy chosen  
friend,  
Or sordid Gloom as master of Thy  
years.



QUATRAINS  
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CHRIST



✠ LIV ✠

**S**O LET us never be afraid  
to rise  
In sure aloofness from  
among the eyes  
That shut to light and beauty,  
and all blind,  
Invoke a broken Christ with sobs  
and sighs.

✠ LV ✠

**N**ULL oft must Thou have  
paused in greening dale,  
And, seeing soul-white  
blossoms grow less pale  
Beneath a young sun's shycaress,  
thrilled deep,  
And prayed of God that loveliness  
prevail.

✠ LVI ✠

**E**ARTH heard and hid her  
scars at Thy command,  
Threw viny mantles o'er  
the unrich land,  
Flung flowers to the waste, and  
palms and springs  
Companioned to redeem the desert's  
sand.



QUATRAINS  
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CHRIST



✠ LVII ✠

**A**ND, O love exquisite ! Thou  
hast the rose,  
The swaying fragrance of  
the garden close,  
Stand forth as fair, renewing  
monuments,  
To mark where clean hearts find a  
brief repose.

✠ LVIII ✠

**D**EAR Nazarene, Thou art  
the soul and source  
Of all true joy. I will my-  
self divorce  
From gloom, and Death shall hear  
a happy song  
When he shall reach me in his  
sombre course.

✠ LIX ✠

**A**H, SWEET the world since  
to Thy tender breast  
Thou gathered all that  
darkened and oppressed,  
And breathing it with beauty and  
delight  
Pursued Thy way to Calvary's sad  
rest.



QUATRAINS  
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✠ LX ✠

**W**HAT madness then to seek  
what He hath ta'en,  
To lift the cup of bitter  
wine and drain  
Its dregs, or grope to find the  
crown of thorns,  
All drunkenly infatuate with pain.

✠ LXI ✠

**S**WEET Jesus, never let me  
be afraid  
To sing my love in lilting  
strain, nor swayed  
By such as have no heart for  
happiness,  
And build their altars in Golgotha's  
shade.

✠ LXII ✠

**I**S good to read the written  
tale of those  
Who shared His triumphs  
and condoled His woes,  
And mark the joyousness of sim-  
ple faith  
That 'lumes the rigor of the gospel  
prose.



QUATRAINS  
OF  
CHRIST



✠ LXIII ✠

**W**HAT better if their words  
fell soft as lace  
On silken breasts? Or that  
they had the grace  
Of sylvan silhouettes? A finer  
mesh  
Would not enhance Truth's never-  
aging face.

✠ LXIV ✠

**A**S MOTHER countriessend  
a guarded fire  
To light a newland's saltars,  
O Desire  
Of all the World, flame in sad  
souls a flare  
Of faith from off Thy Pentecostal  
pyre.

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# QUATRAINS OF CHRIST



## ✠ LXV ✠

**L**ET fools with much pre-  
tense of wisdom scout  
The News, and wag their  
heads in owlish doubt  
Of great Jehovah's all-embracing  
scheme  
Because there is a Door they stand  
without.

## ✠ LXVI ✠

**C**ONTENT are we, the chil-  
dren of His hand,  
To watch and wait, nor  
blatantly demand,  
Assured that in His own good  
time He will  
Unlock the Door, and let us under-  
stand.

## ✠ LXVII ✠

**W**ITH all the wonder of the  
world before  
Our eyes, His love unfold-  
ing more and more,  
Shall we not grasp the Miracle of  
Life,  
Ere thronging fierce and clamant at  
the Door?



QUATRAINS  
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CHRIST



✠ LXVIII ✠

**I** HAVE no gift to see be-  
yond the years,  
But when repentance came  
with helpful tears  
Dear Faith accompanied, and has  
remained  
To guard my soul against recurring  
fears.

✠ LXIX ✠

**T**OO much of rain may fall  
and rot the vine,  
A drought burn bare the  
field, the first-born pine,  
Disaster raze the House of Hap-  
piness —  
Small things to match against the  
Plan divine.

✠ LXX ✠

**W**HEN sleeps the trusting  
soul in sweet content,  
Faith marshaling its  
dreams, and all unrent  
By warring doubts and mad un-  
rests, then why  
Awake and plunge it into vain fer-  
ment?



QUATRAINS  
OF  
CHRIST



✠ LXXI ✠

**C**HAOS first reigned. Did  
star call unto star,  
The seas select their beds,  
and from afar  
The worlds assemble to assign  
their swings,  
Or did a Master place them as they  
are?

✠ LXXII ✠

**A**ND if 'twas God that en-  
tered brooding Space,  
And gave to everything a  
plan and place,  
Was it achildishgame Hestoooped  
to play,  
And, having played, then turned  
away His face?

✠ LXXIII ✠

**T**HE queenly seasons, flash-  
ingly arrayed,  
In tuneful, circumstantial  
pomp parade,  
And on the carpet-stretch of  
splendid days,  
The varied wonders of the world  
are laid.



QUATRAINS  
OF  
CHRIST



✠ LXXIV ✠

**T**HE singing soul's insistent,  
yearning strain  
Tells immortality, yet are  
there vain  
And insolent demands for guar-  
antee  
That we shall come to live and  
love again.

✠ LXXV ✠

**I**S of His wisdom that He  
does not set  
Ungrateful doubts at rest,  
else would we let  
Mad passions loose, and scornful  
of this life,  
Give over to neglect and evil fret.

✠ LXXVI ✠

**T**HINK you that He who  
wakes the vernal seed  
From where it sleeps with  
death beneath the mead,  
Will coldly let His imaged chil-  
dren sink  
To nothingness, and pay no further  
heed?



QUATRAINS  
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CHRIST



✠ LXXVII ✠

**T**ODAY will Yesterday's rare  
rose entomb,  
Ah, yes, but where a hint  
of final doom?

Some rest, the trumpet call, a  
judgment passed,  
And then Tomorrow's new and  
richer bloom.

✠ LXXVIII ✠

**W**HAT mad pretense it is  
that fails to hear  
The symphony of suns, and  
shuts the ear

When through the joyous lilt of  
growing things,  
The testimony of the sea comes  
clear.

✠ LXXIX ✠

**L**OOK to the singing seed  
and sap. The whole  
Of nature races to an un-  
seen goal,

Where God, the Master of the  
Games, hath hung  
The high incentive of a human  
soul.



# QUATRAINS OF CHRIST



## ✠ LXXX ✠

**I** KNOW that many are the  
tales they tell  
Of fearful flames in an en-  
during hell,  
But ever have they failed to ter-  
rify,  
So powerful Creation's tender spell.

## ✠ LXXXI ✠

**T**HE Hand that wrought  
with such a sure intent,  
And half of Heaven's  
hoarded beauty spent  
Upon the world, could never  
clench to strike,  
Or hurl a sightless soul to punish-  
ment.

## ✠ LXXXII ✠

**T**HE message of a day is  
altered by  
The thoughts of those that  
pass it on, then why  
Assume God's word uncolored  
and unchanged  
By all His messengers since Sinai?



QUATRAINS  
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CHRIST



✠ LXXXIII ✠

**B**Y PATHS of peril, agony  
and shame,  
Past coupled menaces of  
sword and flame,  
Through wolf-fanged centuries  
that howled their hate —  
'Twas in such way the holy message  
came.

✠ LXXXIV ✠

**G**REAT souls who suffered  
silently, and yet  
What blame to them if all  
the hate they met  
Bit passion deep, and charged  
their carried words  
With less of gentleness and more  
of threat?

✠ LXXXV ✠

**B**UT let it pass. This night  
a moon shall rise  
To paint a pledge of peace  
upon the skies,  
And with the splendor of the  
morning come  
A reassuring sun to kiss our eyes.



QUATRAINS  
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CHRIST



✠ LXXXVI ✠

**T**HE west-wind Ariels shall  
gaily spill  
Earth's chalice'd charm, and  
quicken'd by the shrill  
Sweet bugles of the dawn, sweep  
swiftly on  
To fret the frondage of the dream-  
ing hill.

✠ LXXXVII ✠

**A**ND ere the burning noon  
shall faint and fail  
A joy-mad lark shall brave  
the higher gale  
To sing his love, and jealously  
efface  
The echoed mem'ries of the night-  
ingale.

✠ LXXXVIII ✠

**O** WORLD of beauty! World  
of charm! Wherenaught  
Is left to vagrant chance, or  
ever brought  
To drear misuse by dearth of  
tenderness,  
Or e'er a second's lack of loving  
thought.



QUATRAINS  
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CHRIST



✠ LXXXIX ✠

**I**ORD, dost offend this simple, hackneyed strain  
In pointed praise of that which should be plain—  
This poor attempt to garland crumbling phrase,  
Somewhat of charm and newness to attain?

✠ XC ✠

**O**LET me take the world's old worn-out tongue  
And crush it to the vague from which it sprung,  
Then fashion from the inarticulate,  
New songs to vary those that have been sung.

✠ XCI ✠

**G**ET is it not the singer nor the song,  
But faith alone—so Ignorance's long  
Monotonies may vie with jeweled psalm,  
And echo in Thine ear as clear and strong?



QUATRAINS  
OF  
CHRIST



\* \* \* \* \*

✠ XCII ✠

**A**ULL oft from out the pleas-  
ure groves that lie  
About the Vineyard comes  
the taunting cry,  
“Why toil ye through the pleas-  
ant days, O Fools?  
Hast ever yet beheld the Master’s  
eye?”

✠ XCIII ✠

**A**H, SWEET the luring  
shade at noontide’s heat,  
With garland-weaving  
Phyllis near, and sweet  
The lulling song, the heart-com-  
pelling pipe,  
The rhythmic twinkling of the  
dancers’ feet.



QUATRAINS  
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✠ XCIV ✠

THEY chant the sun, the  
rose; and dreamy-eyed,  
Sing sultans, beauty, wine,  
the pomp and pride  
That ever tends on Pleasure's  
golden court,  
Till simple Faith seems very poor  
beside.

✠ XCV ✠

AND soft as flower-petals  
Chloe's breast,  
Its creamy charm allur-  
ingly confessed —  
Aye, soft as blossoms in a prince's  
keep,  
Slave-watched, and by Hyblean  
winds caressed.

✠ XCVI ✠

BUT solemn night descends  
upon the play,  
In crashing discord ends  
the roundelay —  
On Chloe's chilling breast the  
roses droop,  
And Phyllis sorrows for the van-  
ished day.



# QUATRAINS OF CHRIST



## ✠ XC VII ✠

**T**HE night that frightens  
idlers brings me peace,  
The dusk that scatters  
them marks my release,  
And so throughout the day I toil  
content,  
Until the twilight's signal of sur-  
cease.

## ✠ XC VIII ✠

**T**HE Vineyard hath its heat  
and hurt, and thin  
My cheeks with tears, but  
what a goal to win!  
And there are Jordan's banks all  
soft with shade,  
And Kedron's flow to lave the body  
in.

## ✠ XC IX ✠

**I**S written so upon the  
world's great crest,  
A million things in Nature  
all attest  
A perfect law of balance which  
makes clear  
That only those who work shall  
know His rest.



QUATRAINS  
OF  
CHRIST



**S**IN may with gorgeousness  
conceal its dole,  
And gloriously garb the  
body's whole  
In dream-born tissues soft as  
Circe's lips,  
But only faith can ornament the  
soul.



**F**INER savor has the  
beaded brine  
That drops from brow to  
lip than idle wine,  
And dearer far the laurel's sober  
leaves  
Than gaily flaunting garlands from  
the vine.



**S**O HOLD thy soul to faith-  
fulness, nor yet  
The ends and purposes of  
toil forget,  
But through the day keep thou  
thine eyes in love  
On that dear Heaven where God's  
throne is set.



QUATRAINS  
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✠ CIII ✠

**F**OR some, eyes hard upon  
the little place  
They plot and potter in,  
ne'er raise a face,  
Until Death's heavy hand arouses  
them  
To cringe before an undreamt, great-  
er space.

✠ CIV ✠

**T**HE Pearl of Peace cannot  
be bought by strands  
Of gems, or treasure gath-  
ered from far lands —  
Remember Simon Magus failed  
to buy  
God's gift from Philip of the Blessed  
Hands.

✠ CV ✠

**S**ALVATION has no price,  
but all must ask  
Who would receive the  
boon, nor wear a mask  
To shield the shame and evil in  
their eyes,  
And hide a face unbronzed by  
worthy task.



# QUATRAINS OF CHRIST



## ♣ CIV ♣

**W**HAT GOD has made us, is the cry  
Of greatest joy — the  
World's end, the high  
Of rest and love to men,  
At the call  
Of peace and love to men.

## ♣ CVI ♣

**G**OD gave us love and will;  
We are the free  
Whomsoever we are  
For we are the free  
The judge,  
But in this world we must be  
We should be.

## ♣ CVIII ♣

**S**UCCESS is a great word  
And great  
Will bring us there, but be  
It is not  
For the world is not at all  
Will remain  
One by one, one by one  
State.



## QUATRAINS OF CHRIST



### ✠ CIX ✠

**T**HE fevered throng infrequently condoles  
With effort-filled defeat,  
yet aureoles  
Unfair success, but God's dear  
mercy makes  
All well within the Marketplace of  
Souls.

### ✠ CX ✠

**G**OD'S mercy! 'Tis the level  
where agree  
The rich, the poor, the fet-  
tered and the free,  
And where the slave's entreaty  
rings as clear  
As some imposing Sultan's haughty  
plea.

### ✠ CXI ✠

**G**OD'S marketplace! Where  
subtly swift and strange  
The values of this sorry  
world all change,  
So that the widow's mite will  
buy far more  
Than all the wealth of Ophir's gold-  
en range.



QUATRAINS  
OF  
CHRIST



✠ CXII ✠

**S**TRANGE, then, that with  
it all so clear and straight  
There should be argument,  
high-pitched debate,  
Dark misconceptions bred in  
angry hearts,  
And swirling mists of controversial  
hate.

✠ CXIII ✠

**T**HUS, awe-struck and afraid,  
some fear God's grace,  
And, crouching, cringing,  
fulsomely abase  
Themselves, while others scorn  
the bended knee,  
And harden eyes to look Him in  
the face.

✠ CXIV ✠

**H**E MOULDED suns, and  
fashioned seas and land,  
He gave us life, and with  
His mighty hand  
Arched Heaven over all, then  
sent His Son  
To consummate the scheme His  
love had planned.



QUATRAINS  
OF  
CHRIST



✠ CXV ✠

**A** SON all rest of princely circumstance,  
Those glories that the  
kingly lot enhance,  
And sent along the way of sacrifice,  
A path that took no heed of change  
or chance.

✠ CXVI ✠

**A** ND that the humblest  
might not miss the clue,  
Denied the royal birth that  
was His due,  
Delivered by a Virgin in the  
dark,  
Her bed of pain the straw the cattle  
knew.

✠ CXVII ✠

**S** TRANGE, then, that with  
this beauty all about  
The shining path that  
points the one way out,  
There should be unrequited wanderings—  
Allurement in the sterile fields of  
Doubt.



QUATRAINS  
OF  
CHRIST



✠ CXVIII ✠

**W**HAT midnight madness not  
to understand,  
To flee the happiness di-  
vinely planned,  
And in some tangle mow a matted  
head,  
And boast escape from Mercy's  
reaching hand.

✠ CXIX ✠

**A**ND strange that sons of  
Thomas still abide  
With us on earth, and still  
the truth deride,  
Because they cannot grasp His  
nail-torn hands  
And see the blood gush from His  
pierced side.

✠ CXX ✠

**O**SHAME of shames! The  
Wise Men saw on high  
God's guiding Star gleam  
in the Eastern Sky,  
And straightway journeyed forth  
across the world,  
With ne'er a question asked of  
Where or Why.



QUATRAINS  
OF  
CHRIST



✠ CXXI ✠

**O** STAR, may thy blest radi-  
ance ever lend  
Its glory to the Heavens  
that o'er us bend,  
That it may guide us to that holy  
place  
Where Christ awaits us at our  
Journey's end.







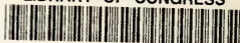




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